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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Handbook Explaining Unique Issues for Victims from Polygamous Communities Now Available from Attorney General's Office

(Phoenix, Ariz. – January 7, 2005) Attorney General Terry Goddard today announced that a handbook offering insight into helping victims from polygamous backgrounds is now available through the Arizona Attorney General's Web site.

The Arizona Attorney General's Office and the Utah Attorney General's Office partnered to develop the manual: "The Primer – Helping Victims of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in Polygamous Communities." This handbook was created to provide case workers, law enforcement officers and others with information about the unique beliefs, practices and terms used by various polygamous communities.

"As a result of the collaborative efforts between Arizona and Utah, we have established protocols for joint investigations by law enforcement and Child Protective Services and expanded resources to assist victims of child abuse and domestic violence from the polygamous communities," Goddard said. "This training manual will serve as a valuable resource to law enforcement and human services personnel serving these communities and charged with assisting victims of child abuse and domestic violence."

The handbook includes a brief history of polygamy, an extensive glossary, descriptions of fundamentalist groups, characteristics, practices and unique factors when working with domestic violence and child abuse victims from a polygamous community.

"We have learned that some victims are not getting help because they fear the people who are offering it don't understand them," said Utah Attorney General Mark Shurtleff. "The Primer is the beginning of what I hope will be many efforts to break down barriers."

The Primer will continue to be updated to reflect changes to the law, availability of resources and changes in the practices and beliefs of individual groups. The Primer is available through the Arizona Attorney General's Web site at www.azag.gov/victims_rights/links.html.

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